



# INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

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## Chair's Corner



This fiscal year seems to have flown by! My term as FEB Chairperson is coming to an end.

While our FEB has accomplished some incredible things this year, I look forward to our continued success under Natalie Saiz' leadership!

### **This year, in review:**

Our **Houston Leadership FEB** class is growing each year. This year we have ten participants from six different agencies. Each month they visit a different agency(ies) to receive a management brief, learn about the management challenges within that particular agency or mission and tour the agency for a first-hand view of how the work is accomplished. In August, the group went to College Station to visit the George Bush Library and the USDA Agriculture Research Service. See more about that forum on page three.

Our **2018 Awards Ceremony** was bumped up a notch this year by having it at the United Way Center. Photos were uploaded to a Dropbox file for agencies, employees, and participants to have almost immediate access for "in-house" agency newsletters, website news, etc. to document the event.

We've partnered with **FEMA** to offer **FEMA COOP classes**, L-548 and L-550, allowing

federal, tribal, state & local government employees to attend at no cost We've scheduled them so that an employee can attend both courses in the span of one work-week. See registration forms available in this newsletter (pg 8 and pg 9).

Houston FEB was represented at the **National FEB** meeting by myself, as Chair; Natalie Saiz, Vice Chair and LeAnn Jenkins, Executive Director.

I thank all of you for contributing to our FEB's



LeAnn Jenkins-Tim Jeffcoat-Natalie Saiz

success this past year and hope you will continue to support Natalie in the same helpful fashion! I look forward to

moving into Ex Officio status and remaining involved with our increasingly active Federal Executive Board!

Tim Jeffcoat, Chair

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## TWO KEY FACTORS FOR HAPPINESS AT WORK

If you don't like the people around you, you hate showing up at work.

Jamie Naughton, Chief of Staff for Zappos, told me she used to think, "Happiness at work was more in your job duties."

"Having best friends at work is really important. And having an environment where you feel like people support you and they're more like family will make you happier."

### Two Key Factors for happiness at work:

Jamie said, "We wrongly believe a new job, promotion, or getting a new boss will make us happy."

#### Who:

Who you work with has greater impact on job happiness than what you do.

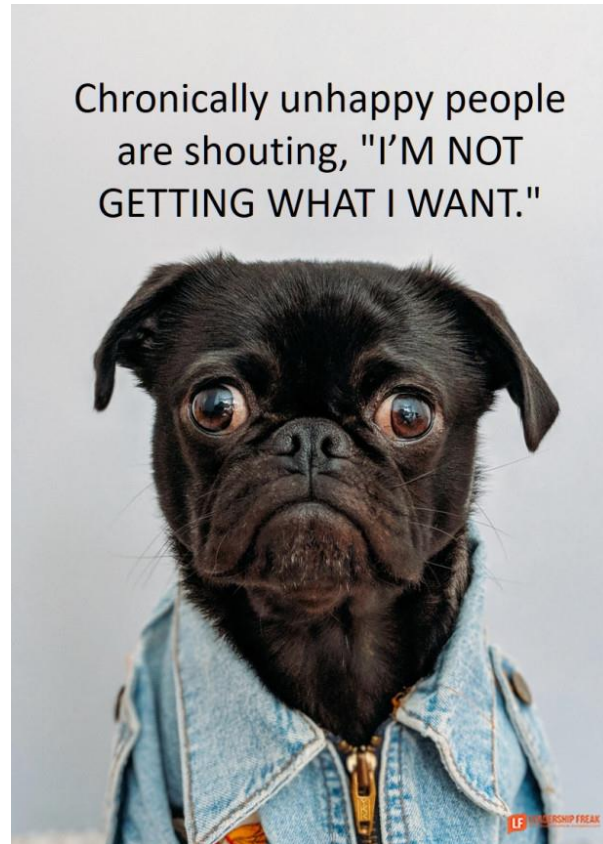
Beware unhappy people. Unhappy people hate the happiness of others. Unhappy people aren't happy until everyone around them shares their unhappiness.

Chronically unhappy people are shouting, "I'M NOT GETTING WHAT I WANT."\*

Tip: *Happiness is found in meaningful service. Selfish people end up unhappy.*

### Connection and support:

"[Happiness at work is about a number of things] and one of them is connectedness."  
Jamie Naughton



Jamie's use of the term "support" reminded me of a conversation I had with Amy Lyman, Cofounder of [Great Place to Work®](#). I asked Amy if great companies put employees first or customers first? She said that it doesn't matter as long as *employees feel supported*.\*\*

### Connecting:

Jamie explained that connection is about knowing people beyond their jobs.

Know your team outside of the work they do.

Treat co-workers like family.

What's important to them has to be important to you.

<https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/08/07/two-key-factors-for-happiness-at-work/>

## Spotlighting Information in Public Service

### Did you Know?

#### Houston Leadership FEB

In August, the 2018 Leadership FEB class visited the Bush Presidential Library and the USDA Agriculture Research Service in College Station.

Of the ten class participants, only four were able to attend the day's forums.

The day began with Leadership FEB class participants receiving a briefing and tour of the George Bush Library. This also included a "behind the scenes" tour into the Archives and an opportunity to see Barbara Bush's photo albums she collected, along with her hand written notes captioning the photos.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) also provided a briefing on the training they conduct for federal agencies and the role they play in the event of a disaster for records recovery.

After lunch, the group went to the USDA Agriculture Research Service where they are doing work on Advanced



Stacy Menard, NASA; Paul McBride, ICE; Walter Darr, FMCS; Dwight Auzenne, NASA.  
George Bush Presidential Library

Genomic and Bioinformatic Tools for Accelerated Cotton Genetic Improvement. They identify key genes and genetic elements in cotton genomes, and use the information in selecting and verifying a range of priority agronomic traits, including biotic and abiotic stress resistance, and fiber and seed properties from materials contained in the USDA NPGS and cotton research community. Short season cotton varieties are bred with specific resistance genes for bacterial blight and early fruiting--characteristics that allow farmers to reduce insecticide use.



USDA Agricultural Research Service tour





### 3 Conversations All Managers Need to Master

Managers don't have enough high quality conversations with their direct reports, according to Ann Phillips, a senior consulting partner with The Ken Blanchard Companies. This deficiency has a negative effect on both productivity and morale.

"Part of effective communication between manager and direct report is a mindset and part is a skillset. Both are required," says Phillips. "It's easy for managers to convince themselves they don't have time for quality conversations, especially when they aren't particularly interested in having them and don't really know how to do it.



"Every manager I've worked with has so much of their own work to do all day, every day, that some can't see their way clear to spending time with the folks who work for them—other than performance reviews, rushed interactions, or crises," explains Phillips. "Conversations between these managers and their people are mostly manager-led directives of 'this is what I want you to do; here's how to do it.' The manager is focused on getting stuff done and on what needs to happen—not on their direct reports' career growth or needs.

"Unfortunately, when individual contributors in this scenario become managers, they treat people exactly the way they were treated. Sub-quality conversations become a cultural norm."

The good news, according to Phillips, is that managers can learn to be more effective in their work conversations.

"If a manager has the right mindset and training, it'll drive the right behavior," says Phillips. She recommends focusing on three specific conversations to get started.

#### The Goal-Setting Conversation

"All good performance begins with clear goals. Effective goal-setting conversations begin with clarity—what to do, by when, and what a good job looks like," says Phillips. "Be specific—and don't be afraid to ask questions. It's critically important to take the time to make sure both parties are interpreting the same words in the same way to avoid misunderstandings.

"Conversations and relationships can go sideways when people interpret things differently but don't have a conversation about that interpretation. Never assume!"

This leads to the second important conversation at which managers need to excel—giving feedback.

#### The Feedback Conversation

"A friend of mine recently told me I tend to hijack conversations," says Phillips. "The funny thing is, I was just about to tell her she does the same thing! We discovered that what I interpret as hijacking and what she interprets as hijacking are two different things.

"We talked about how, when she's talking and pauses to think, I rush in to fill the empty space. It goes back to my experience at home. In my family, you talk, talk, talk, talk, and there are no pauses. So when my friend goes silent, I fill in the gap and start talking about something.

"Then I explained to her that I feel she hijacks the conversation when I tell her about something happening in my life and she immediately turns it into a discussion about something that's happening in her life. It's related, but it still feels to me like she is making it about her.

"Because we are committed to our friendship, we're willing to discuss things that are uncomfortable and to consider each other's point of view. That's important at work, too. Managers and direct reports need to have the type of relationship where they can talk honestly. When a manager cares about a direct report as a human being—and vice versa—they build up an emotional bank account they can

### 3 Conversations All Managers Need to Master (Cont'd)

draw from. That allows them to have difficult conversations when they need to.”

Sadly, the word *feedback* has a negative connotation in business today, says Phillips.

“People seldom think of feedback as praise or recognition. When people hear that word, they think at best it’s going to be constructive criticism. But it rarely feels constructive—it just feels like criticism.

“It’s another area where most managers don’t have the skills they need—especially feedback around performance improvement and redirection. Managers are so concerned about how someone might respond to feedback, they tend to avoid it altogether.”

One way managers can be more successful when preparing to give feedback is to make sure they are coming at it from the right place.

“Your feedback can’t be based on your own personal agenda,” says Phillips. “It has to be about helping other people be successful or otherwise improving the team. If you come from a personal agenda, your feedback will come across poorly.

“In my conversation with my friend, she gave me the feedback about the way I hijack conversations because she wanted our conversations to be better. I knew that, and it gave me a chance to think about my behavior and run it over in my mind. That was a good learning for me—to recognize that behavior I picked up from my family might be misinterpreted when I’m dealing with other people.”

#### The One-on-One Conversation

Listening and focusing on the other person’s agenda is especially important when managers conduct one-on-one conversations with their direct reports, says Phillips.

“It’s easy to fall into the manager’s agenda, where one-on-ones can turn into a review of how the direct report is doing on each of their goals. At The Ken Blanchard Companies, we teach managers to schedule semi-monthly one-

on-ones, where the agenda is driven by the individual contributor and what they need.”

The manager’s primary role is to listen and provide support, says Phillips. Senior leaders are generally better at this than are new managers.

“At the senior levels of an organization, a VP typically will have more experience asking a direct report how things are going and finding out what the direct report needs to succeed. As you move down to the frontlines of an organization, managers are less experienced at taking the lead in a conversation like that.”

Especially at the frontlines, Phillips observes, managers and supervisors need training in how to have effective one-on-one conversations. Otherwise, the direct report is likely to default to the manager and ask the manager what *they* want talk about.

“It’s important to teach managers to ask open-ended questions about what an individual contributor’s needs are. Suppose the direct report comes into the meeting with a blank piece of paper and says, ‘What do you want talk about?’ The manager should take that opening and say, ‘Let’s talk about some things you are working on. Let’s list the three or four tasks, discuss your development level, and talk about how I can help you.’ Eventually, that direct report will become more proactive and learn to take the lead in those conversations.”

It’s a process and a joint responsibility—one where everybody benefits, says Phillips.

“Leaders influence through the power of their conversations. Train your managers—and your individual contributors—in the skills they need for more effective conversations at work. It’s one of the best ways to improve performance and satisfaction.”

<https://resources.kenblanchard.com/blanchard-leaderchat/3-conversations-all-managers-need-to-master?elqTrackId=f42cb52ff4ae46b18502fda0b4d09320&elq=83e3b362cdc942f4a34aea24dda55156&elqaid=1585&elqat=1&elqCampaignId=726>

## YOU'RE NOT A CONTROL FREAK IF ...

You're not a control freak if you send back a rare steak when you ordered medium.

#1. You're not a control freak if you have high standards for yourself and others. But you're a controlling jerk if you expect more from others than you expect from yourself.

#2. You're not a control freak if you pay attention to details.

7 ways to pay attention to details without driving everyone crazy:

1. Set deadlines and ask for reports.  
Explain why it matters and what you expect.
2. Give people a chance to live up to your expectation, even if it means they fail.
3. Respond quickly when people don't live up to their commitments.
4. Make room for people to excel after they demonstrate reliability.
5. Notice where people tend to stumble.  
Assign work based on strengths and track-record.
6. Reward people who bring up problems and issues before they get out of hand.  
Correct those who hide problems.
7. Escalate your response to patterns of success or failure. Keep giving space as

performance trends upward. Intervene more actively when performance trends downward. Think of this as the dance of intervention.

#3. You're not a control freak if you expect people to perform up to their potential. You're a boss-hole if you nag about past failures.

#4. You're not a control freak if you bring up

awkward issues with kindness and forward-facing curiosity. You're a jerk-hole if you hold people accountable to fuzzy expectations.

#5. You're not a control freak if you expect people to correct their own mistakes. Anyone who consistently falls short needs at least one of the following:

- A new job.
- A new job description.
- Training.
- A new manager.

#6. You're not a control freak if you know how to chill out with your team.

#7. You're not a control freak when responsible failure is a learning experience. You're a lousy leader when you tolerate patterns of failure.

<https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/07/09/youre-not-a-control-freak-if/>



### 3 WAYS TO NAVIGATE TOUGH TIMES

The things that matter most, matter most during tough times.

#### 3 ways to Navigate tough times:

**#1: Prepare before tough times arrive:** It's too late to prepare for rough seas when the seas are already rough. The important practices of leadership are necessary when skies are blue.

Important things like relationship building don't feel important until you need a relationship.

1. Schedule relationship building.
  - Networking lunches.
  - Thank you notes.
  - Catch-up phone calls.
  - Send follow-up emails.
2. Stand with others when they experience tough times. (In order to do this, keep in touch with key people.)
3. Get to know people as people, not simply tools for delivering results.

#### *If you're currently in tough times:*

**#2: Nurture clear-headed thinking:** Search for points of 'acceptable clarity' when times are tough.

Go with your highest – imperfect – point of clarity when you're in a fog.

1. Adopt practices to mitigate stress. Anxiety hinders thinking. Stress makes

you stupid.

2. Realize acceptable levels of stress sharpen your focus.
3. Connect with leaders who have

navigated similar environments.

4. Let your team know that you're counting on them. Turbulence isn't the time for leaders to wring their hands in fear.

5. Seek insight from others. Don't pretend you know when you don't.

6. Talk solutions more than problems.

7. Jump into situations with enthusiasm.

Reluctance seldom serves leaders well.

8. Schedule brief quiet times. Go for short walks.

9. Exercise and eat well.
10. Get enough sleep.

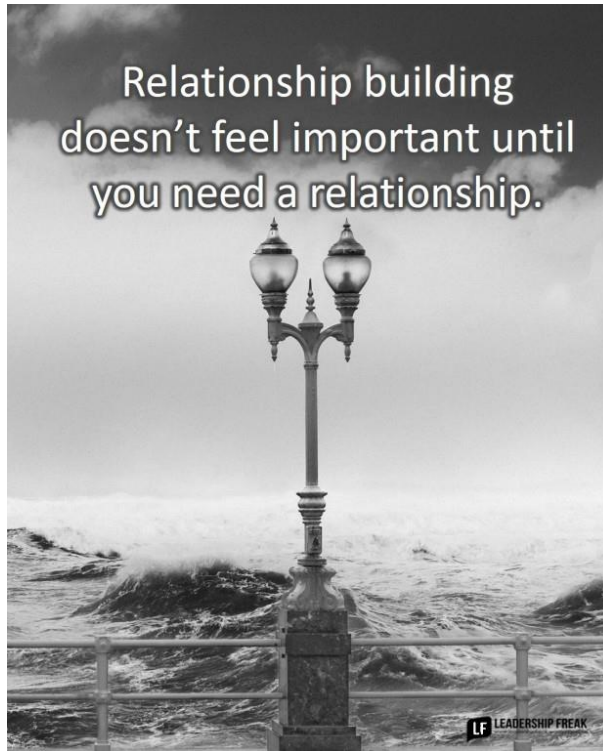
The least glamorous practices of leadership are the more important practices.

Preparation is boring until high winds hit.

**#3: Reconnect with purpose and build the airplane in the air:** You need a compass to show direction when times are turbulent. But you'll need to build the airplane while you're in the air.

Commit to serve the best interest of your team and your organization. Self-serving leaders make tough times tougher.

<https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/08/22/3-ways-to-navigate-tough-times/>







## FEMA-certified “Train the Trainer” COOP Training Courses



**FEMA**

Through a partnership between FEMA and the Houston FEB, we will be hosting the L-548 course in Houston to leverage resources and multiply results. Upon successful completion of the course, the attendee receives a FEMA certificate.

- The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Manager’s Training Course is to provide COOP training for Program Managers at the Federal, State, Tribal, and Local levels of government. This training includes a train-the-trainer module to equip the managers to train the course to others.

Upon completion of this course, participants should be able to do the following: Define COOP; Explain the business benefits of COOP; identify the elements of a viable COOP capability; identify the processes, resources, and tasks necessary to implement and manage a successful COOP Program.

*There is no cost for the training; however, the employee’s agency is responsible for all travel costs associated with this training.*

<b>Course title:</b>	L548 – COOP Program Manager’s Course
<b>Location:</b>	Leland, 1919 Smith Street, Houston, First Floor Conference Room
<b>Date:</b>	November 26-27, 2018
<b>Time:</b>	8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Name:	*Student ID:
Agency Address:	
Certificate mailing address:	
Phone:	Email:

**\*Obtain a FEMA Student Identification (SID) number:**

Step 1: To register, go to <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>

Step 2: Click on the "Need a FEMA SID" box on the right side of the screen.

Step 3: Follow the instructions and provide the necessary information to create your account.

Step 4: You will receive an email with your SID number. You should save this number in a secure location.

Step 5: Utilize your SID in Block 3 of the Form 119-25-1 (a signed copy **MUST** accompany this form)

***A signed copy of FEMA Form 119-25-1 must also accompany this form (available on our website at <https://www.oklahoma.feb.gov/Documents/119-25-1.pdf>)***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return this registration form to the FEB Office ***no later than November 1, 2018*** in order to ensure sufficient materials.

Email registration form to: [LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov](mailto:LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov)





## FEMA-certified “Train the Trainer” COOP Training Courses


**FEMA**

Through a partnership between FEMA and the Houston FEB, we will be hosting the L-550 course in Houston to leverage resources and multiply results. Upon successful completion of the course, the attendee receives a FEMA certificate.

- The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Planner’s Training Course is to provide COOP training for Program Managers at the Federal, State, Local, and Tribal levels of government. This training includes a train-the-trainer module to equip the managers to train the course to others.

This course provides instructions for developing or updating a Continuity Plan according to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Continuity Guidance.

*There is no cost for the training; however, the employee’s agency is responsible for all travel costs associated with this training.*

<b>Course title:</b>	L550 – COOP Planner’s Training Course
<b>Location:</b>	Leland, 1919 Smith Street, Houston, First Floor Conference Room
<b>Date:</b>	November 28-30, 2018
<b>Time:</b>	8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

*Prerequisites for taking this class: Successful completion of COOP Managers Train-the-Trainer Course (E/L/G or IS548); and a COOP Plan (a final or draft plan will be required for activities during the course). Each student should bring a copy of their current plan or draft plan.*

Name:	*Student ID:
Agency Address:	
Certificate mailing address:	
Phone:	Email:

**\*Obtain a FEMA Student Identification (SID) number:**

Step 1: To register, go to <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Email registration form to: [LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov](mailto:LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov)



## Crisis Communications Spokespersons Training for Executives and Senior Leaders



Date:	Friday, September 14, 2018
Time:	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Location:	Leland Building, 1919 Smith Street, 10 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Houston (Bayou Room)
Why?	<p>Focusing on the things that can “make” or “break” senior leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to maintain a positive relationship with the media in the first hours of a crisis.</li> <li>• How to be a team player rather than merely an individual agency spokesperson.</li> <li>• How to maintain a good media relationship after the crisis is over.</li> </ul>
Topics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A quick primer on what to expect from persistent, aggressive reporters covering your problem, crisis or event.</li> <li>• A total of three on-camera exercises. Each exercise is critiqued in an open forum by the instructor.</li> <li>• Training based on a realistic scenario chosen by the client.</li> <li>• Instructors and role players with significant journalism and media relations experience.</li> </ul>
Who Should Attend?	Agency Leaders, Senior Managers that have agency responsibility that would place them in a situation to be approached by the media in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.
Cost:	\$1,175.00 per person

### Registration

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

***Register early! This class will be limited to twelve participants!***

Mail registration to:	Federal Executive Board 2320 La Branch Street, Rm 1107 Houston, TX 77004
Email to:	LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov

*Cancellation Policy: Understanding that unforeseen circumstances may preclude an individual from attending, cancellations will be permitted through August 29, 2018. However, after that date, registrations must be honored by the individual or agency involved. If you are unable to attend, substitute attendees are authorized and encouraged!*